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Lawor and Bot-walim formerly situated on the mainland opposite Wala. There is a considerable body of evidence, however, which suggests that at one time all the Small Islands were even more similar in organisation than they are today, and that the existing organisation on Vao is the model to which all formerly conformed. It would be anticipating future volumes to produce all the evidence here, and I will content myself now with repeating that it is on this account, and with a view to tracing the change, that I have chosen Vao as the subject of the first volume in this series.

Owing to the wealth of material, I propose in this volume to reduce references to the other islands to a minimum, leaving the description of the processes of change occurring in them to future publications, and to concentrate here exclusively on the older type of social organisation still existing on Vao. Even on Vao, influences disruptive of the old forms of culture are already at work, one example of which is seen in the tendency already mentioned for the two double-villages on the Inferior Side of the Island to split up into four exogamous units.

SOCIAL ORGANISATION ON VAO

"Sides of the Island."

As we have seen, the island of Vao is primarily divided, both geographically and socially, into two asymmetrical Sides. These Sides are not named, members of each moiety referring to the other simply as *tosan*, meaning "side," or, as we should say, "the other side." In order to distinguish these from the numerous other progressively dual divisions of society we shall meet with in this chapter, I will refer to them as "Sides of the Island." The two Sides of the Island, though indispensable to one another as parts of a single organisation, live in a traditional state of enmity one with the other.[1]

Double-villages.

On the Superior Side, facing the mainland and sharing possession of the best beach called Kowu, are two named villages, Pete-hul and Toghvanu, which together form the unnamed patrilineal exogamous double-village which occupies this Side of the Island.[2]

On the Inferior seaward Side of the Island are the two unnamed patrilineal exogamous double-villages composed respectively of the named villages Venu and Peter-ihi, occupying the eastern half of the central ridge, and Singon and Norohure, occupying the easterly point.

[1] For detailed accounts of this enmity, see Chapters XXIII on Warfare.

[2] One aspect of the superiority of this double-village is the fact that its inhabitants regard themselves as philological purists, rejecting linguistic innovations from Atchin, such as are favoured by those of the Inferior Side of the Island (Godefroy, I, 1933, p. 54).

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Parent and offshoot villages.

Just as the whole island is divided into Superior and Inferior Sides, so also in each double-village one component village is regarded as superior, and the other as inferior. In each case the superior village represents the original foundation and will therefore be referred to as the parent village, of which the inferior village is the offshoot.

The six villages of Vao are paired in this respect as follows: [1]

	Superior (parent) Village	Inferior (offshoot) Village
Superior Side of the Island	Pete-hul	Togh-vanu
Inferior Side of the Island	Peter-ihi	Venu
	Singon	Norohure

FIG. 3

This phenomenon of parent and offshoot villages is always represented by the natives as being due to historical accident. As each double-village, however, is so split, and as the six villages so formed constitute the essential organisation of the island, we shall have to seek further for the real meaning of this arrangement. The historical explanation as given by the natives for the bisection of the Superior Side will be given in the next chapter. The actual mechanism causing the split and the "inferiority" of the offshoot villages will be dealt with in the chapters on Kinship.

Refugee communities.

The only sections of the community not referred to in the above account are:

(*a*) The refugee community of Tolamp, descended from the inhabitants of a now submerged island formerly situated between Vao and Atchin. The survivors and their descendants first took refuge on the mainland, where they built a number of villages in succession till in recent years the last remnants of them settled on Vao, on land belonging to the village of Togh-vanu, with which they had always had close kinship ties, and made a dancing-ground adjoining that of their hosts. Owing

[1] The number and names of married men in each village in the year 1932 are given on page 746. It is worth noting that the population on each Side of the Island is approximately equal.

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361 village of Pete-hul–Togh-vanu on Vao. According to this account,
535 fully related below,[1] there was in the beginning only one village, Pete-hul, which was founded by two brothers, each of whom constructed his own dancing-ground, both being placed end to end as in the modern village of Peter-ihi. Later, owing to changes in the kinship system which will be fully discussed in Chapter VI, some of the descendants of the younger brother split off from the parent community to found the offshoot village of Togh-vanu by the construction of a separate dancing-ground some little distance away. I mention this here as a possible explanation of the existing two dancing-grounds end-to-end at Peter-ihi, the reason for which I omitted to enquire into on the spot.[2]

"*Sides of the Stone.*"

621 We have already noted (1) the division of the island into two moieties,
616 and (2) that of each double-village into two twin-villages.

The next sub-division to be recorded is that of the population of each village into two yet further patrilineal moieties called *tosan na-vatu*. We have already met with the word *tosan* used by itself as referring to the two unnamed "Sides of the Island." Here also the word *tosan* means "side," and, combined with the word *na-vatu*, "stone," means "Side of the Stone." As in the case of the two "Sides of the Island," these two moieties are unnamed, members of each moiety referring to members of the other simply as *tosan na-vatu*, "Side (i.e. the other Side) of the Stone." [3]

Organisation of the Double-Village of Pete-hul–Togh-vanu on the Superior Side of the Island

Pete-hul founded by Ta-ghar.

621 What has been said above applies to every village on the island. With regard to the further dual divisions into which society is organised, we are faced with the fact of new disturbing influences from Atchin which have to some extent upset the old order.

[1] See p. 89.

[2] The situation in regard to Peter-ihi is, however, complicated by the fact that this village is already provided with an offshoot village, Venu. It would appear that the same process which caused the formation of the original offshoot village is again in operation, and that the parent village is once more in process of dividing into two.

[3] Natives of Vao automatically know to which Side of the Stone this phrase refers, since it must be that Side of the Stone in the speaker's own village to which he himself does not belong. When speaking to strangers, or of the Sides of the Stone in another village, distinction between the two Sides is made by referring specifically to the two Quarters (see p. 70 and Fig. 5) of which each Side is composed. Thus, in the case of Pete-hul, specific reference can only be made by speaking of one Side of the Stone as "*tosan na-vatu La-mbot-na-ninge, Nalu*," these being the names of the two Quarters composing one Side (see below), and of the other as "*tosan na-vatu La-mbet-ra, La-mbarang*."

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ments. All these, it will be noticed, have been strictly from the patrilineal point of view, in accordance with the natives' present preoccupation with patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence.

There is, however, another side to the question, namely the principle of matrilineal descent, which is less obvious on the surface but nevertheless forms the foundation of the whole social system.

Matrilineal Moieties and Marriage Sections

We have already seen how Vaõ is the most northerly outpost of the patrilineal area, which includes the whole of the South and Central New Hebrides, and that in the islands immediately to the north and northeast there is a dual organisation consisting of two exogamous matrilineal moieties with descent reckoned in the female line. These two matrilineal moieties are found also throughout the Small Islands in the social divisions referred to by the natives in pidgin-English as "lines," the word "line" being applied to that section of each matrilineal moiety that is found in any one patrilocal village. In this way each village contains two "lines," each such "line" consisting of those members of the village who belong to one of the two matrilineal moieties that extend throughout this wide area despite the overt patrilocal organisation. Thus, in the great Maki rite each "line" alternately acts as introducer to the other.[1] In Atchin the wooden images set up by the members of each "line" are for this reason called *n'ei weaweng*, of which the first word, *n'ei*, means "wood" and hence "wooden image," and the second word, *weaweng*, is equivalent to the Oba expression *wai vung* meaning "matrilineal moiety," of which the literal rendering is "'bunches of fruit' . . . as if all the members hang on the same branch." [2]

Similar "lines" are found in Raga and Ambrim, where in each case their existence is due, as in the Small Islands, to the influence of the matrilineal moieties on the overt patrilineal social organisation.

It will be noted, therefore, that in all the areas just mentioned descent is both patrilineal in respect of the overt patrilineal organisation, *and* matrilineal in respect of the exogamous matrilineal moieties. This fact led Rivers, in his attempt to understand the kinship system of North Raga, to put forward the suggestion that there might possibly exist in these islands what are called "class systems" of kinship similar in essentials to those found in most parts of Australia.[3]

Rivers did not, however, succeed in working out the details of any such system, and it was left to the genius and determination of Deacon actually to demonstrate the existence of a class system in Ambrim.[4] This

[1] See p. 294.
[2] Rivers, 1, vol. II, pp. 66, 75.
[3] Codrington, 3, p. 26.
[4] Deacon, 2.

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sections of Small Island society and liable at any time to be fanned into flame.

In doing this, it must be pointed out that it is necessary always to make a clear distinction between immediate causes of war and the more fundamental social antagonisms. As I have said, the immediate causes are, as a rule, adultery, elopement and theft. Such matters in our society might lead to individual vengeance or litigation, but would not involve whole communities. The reason for this is that our society is no longer founded on kinship, this factor having lost much of its weight owing to the size of the communities we live in and a large number of other factors. Among most primitive communities, however, kinship is sociologically of fundamental importance, extending its influence in the case of the Small Islands not only over all aspects of this life, but also over the next, since kinship considerations are the chief factor in determining the action of ghosts in relation to their living survivors.

Superior and Inferior Sides of all Islands Linked respectively to Form Hostile Moieties

In the Small Islands by far the most important aspect of kinship as regards its influence on warfare is the division of each island, both geographically and socially, into two Sides mutually dependent on one another but permanently hostile. This dual division has a much deeper psychological import than is at first sight apparent. In the first place, while the inhabitants of each island recognise their solidarity by having a common name,[1] thus showing their conscious attitude as members of a single community, the Sides of each Island are in most cases unnamed, indicating the deeply unconscious nature of the forces at work between them. In the second place, each Side of each Island has special relations with certain of the villages on the adjacent Malekulan mainland which make them natural allies in case of war, and in all my records of fighting between the Small Islanders and their mainland neighbours there is no case in which the whole of any one island has taken up arms together, but on the contrary each such war has been waged by the members of one Side of the Island only, without help from the other.[2]

Yet further, we have already seen how each island has a geographically smaller but socially "Superior" Side owning the best beach facing the mainland, and a geographically larger but socially "Inferior" Side facing the open sea.[3] What I have not previously pointed out, however,

[1] For example, *To Vao*, the people of Vao; *To Tsan*, the people of Atchin; *To Wala*, the people of Wala; and so on.

[2] Thus, in the account given on pp. 608-12 it is the Superior Side of Vao only, unassisted by the Inferior Side, that is engaged.

[3] See p. 55.

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is the fact that the names of the parent village on the "Superior" Side of each Island are similar. Thus Pete-hul on Vao, Pweter-tsŭts on Atchin and Pwe-lut on Wala have somewhat similar names each beginning with what is philologically the same syllable, in each case meaning "stone" or "stones," and regard themselves as forming a kind of aristocracy, while the names of the villages on the Inferior Sides differ considerably [1] and have less sense of solidarity among themselves. Moreover, in any war taking place between any two of the Small Islands, it is found always that in neither case is the whole island involved, but that the quarrel is in each case between the Superior Side of one Island and the Inferior Side of the other.[2] Thus, while geographically each island is a separate entity, and while the inhabitants of each island form a distinct linguistic group, from the point of view of social organisation as seen in the conduct of warfare the homogeneity of each island is transcended by that of the two moieties into which the whole cultural area comprising the Small Islands and the adjacent Malekulan mainland is divided.

In this way, the two Sides into which each Small Island is split up are seen to be but aspects of a much larger whole. These Sides in all cases have the profoundest suspicion of one another, a suspicion which is at any time liable to break out into open hostility, and in this way resemble the two matrilineal moieties found in the dual organisation area immediately to the north and east in the islands of Oba and Maewo and parts of Santo, as well as the Banks Islands and the Torres Islands.[3] Indeed, as I have suggested elsewhere, it is probable that, though now patrilineal, the Sides found in the Small Islands were at some not very distant date matrilineal, representing the matrilineal moieties in the above-named districts, before the introduction of overt patrilineal descent into this part of Malekula.

However this may be, the hostility exists, and is very deep-rooted. When we consider that at least half the population of one Side of each Island takes its wives from the other Side of the same Island the hostility may seem to us very curious. It might at first sight appear due to the resentment felt by every Small Islander towards his wife's father, who exacts from his son-in-law a lifelong tribute in pigs from which there is no escape and which the native feels at the same time insupportable and inescapable, as in fact it is. If the father dies her brothers assume his

[1] The only exception being Peter-ihi on the Inferior Side of Vao.

[2] Thus in the historical account given on pp. 613-17 the Superior Side of Vao engages the Inferior Side of Atchin, neither party being assisted by the other Side of its own Island. Compare the similar segmentation among Australian tribes, among whom "The fights that formerly took place were not wars of one tribe with another, but of one part of one tribe with one part of another, or at times of one part of a tribe with another part of the same tribe. Thus there was no unity of the tribe in warfare." (Radcliffe-Brown, *Three Tribes of Western Australia*, JRAI, vol. XLIII, pp. 144-5.)

[3] See Codrington, 3, pp. 24 ff.; Rivers, 1, chapter II, etc. For similar hostile groups in Tanna, Lifu and other parts of Melanesia, see Wedgwood, 1, pp. 8, 9.

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rôle, so that the tribute due from the husband is, in fact, payable to his wife's whole clan. This feeling of unwilling serfdom to the wife's people may contribute to the sense of hostility between the two moieties, but this could do so only in the case of patrilineal communities such as exist in the Small Islands. It could not operate in a system of matrilineal moieties, since in these a man's wife's father belongs to the same moiety as himself. Yet the mutual hostility between the two Sides of each Small Island is of the same order precisely as that between the two matrilineal moieties in neighbouring islands.

Hostility between pairs of opposites extends throughout whole social organisation.

I venture to suggest, therefore, that something deeper than mere economic considerations lies beneath this widespread tension between intermarrying moieties. This question cannot be discussed without raising the problem of the origin of the moieties themselves. For the two Sides of the Island are not the only pairs of moieties that have to be considered. As we have seen in the chapter on Social Organisation,[1] the two Sides of the Island are themselves each split into sub-moieties, represented by one double-village on one Side and two double-villages on the other. Each of these sub-moieties is also liable at any moment to become hostile to the other, and what seems on the surface to be one homogeneous double-village will suddenly split up into two hostile camps. Each village is, moreover, yet further sub-divided into two "Sides of the Stone," which may, if any member of one offend a member of the other through some individual act of violence or by the revival of some old quarrel of a more communal nature, themselves suddenly become hostilely opposed.[2] The same tendency is seen even within the "Sides of the Stone," which, as we have seen, are still further divided into two so as to form four Quarters which, though essential to the whole village organisation, themselves on occasion literally take up the cudgels against one another. Finally, each Quarter is yet further split into two "Sides of the Lodge," between whom a smouldering opposition exists, ready to burst forth at any moment if any quarrel should arise between members of the two opposing Sides.

Progressive sub-division into moieties a spontaneous phenomenon.

Rivers has attempted to explain the hostility between the two main matrilineal moieties forming the dual organisation in the Banks Islands and Northern New Hebrides as being due to the fusion of two mutually hostile peoples who nevertheless managed to settle down together without either wishing to exterminate the other.[3] While by no means denying the fact of culture-contact, evidence for which abounds in every aspect

[1] Chapter III, pp. 57-8.
[2] See p. 68.
[3] Rivers, 1, vol. II, chapter XXXVIII.

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of Malekulan culture, I cannot bring myself to accept this as an explanation for the origin even of the two main moieties. Were this the case, we should expect at least that the two moieties should be named. But more often, as in the Small Islands, they are unnamed. Moreover, such an explanation could not possibly hold for the successive sub-divisions just mentioned. In fact, it will, I think, be evident from the above account that the tendency to sub-divide till the opposing groups are so small that no further sub-division is possible, far from being due to the chance fusion of two opposing groups, represents an organic process at work in the body politic itself, resembling the biological splitting of cells in living tissue.

While in the sphere of individual human relations the primary impulse towards this process lies clearly in the creative tension between the sexes, the same tension is reproduced on the sociological level in the relation between the two opposing moieties, each of which at the same time provides wives for the other. The two sexes must, however, become differentiated before they can unite. The same tendency to split and re-unite (for the hostile moieties are in each case dependent on one another for their very existence and for the performance of every ritual act) is seen also in a highly developed condition in class systems of kinship. It is found also in the realm of psychology, the health of each individual depending largely on the maintenance of a satisfactory tension between pairs of complementary opposites. If the tension becomes too one-sided this results in a psychotic condition upsetting the balance of the whole psyche in the same way that anything resembling a war of extermination between any of the two pairs of moieties on Vao would destroy the life of the whole island. There is thus strong presumptive evidence of a close analogy between the processes of biology, psychology and sociology. In each case the ideal pattern is the initial split followed by the re-union of complementary opposites under conditions of permanent and creative tension.

In the case of life on the Small Island of Vao the tension shows itself in the hostility above mentioned, and I trust that in the above brief discussion I may have succeeded in showing in some measure that the hostility so deplored by missionaries and others was, in fact, essential to the health and well-being of the race, so long as it was circumscribed in its relations to a comparatively closed area of small dimensions, and to a population, if we include all the Small Islands and adjacent mainland at the height of their prosperity before the advent of the white man, of not more than a few thousand. Now that the islands have been opened up to contact with the rest of the world, thus automatically destroying the circumscribed conditions under which alone such a primitive system can work, the problem has become very different, and the natives themselves have begun to deplore the internecine strife that prevents them from uniting against the common foe.